

REMARKS

Claims 1-35 are now pending in the application. The amendments to the claims contained herein are of equivalent scope as originally filed and, thus, are not a narrowing amendment. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hayasaka (U.S. Pat. No. 6,809,421) in view of Pace (U.S. Pat. No. 5,793,105). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a cross-sectional area of the distal end portion is made equal to or smaller than a cross-sectional area of the electrode at the active surface of the substrate. This is shown, for example, in Figure 1 where the distal end 34 of the electrode 36 has a cross-sectional area that is made equal to or smaller than a cross-sectional area 35 of the electrode 36 at the active surface 10a of the substrate 10. As admitted by the Examiner, Hayasaka is silent with respect to this aspect of the claimed invention.

Pace also fails to teach this configuration because Pace teaches a distal end 522 that has a larger cross-sectional area than the electrode 520 at the active surface 521 of the substrate 510. Because Pace teaches the opposite configuration, the alleged combination of Hayasaka and Pace does not yield the claimed invention. As such, claim 1 and each corresponding dependent claim 1 would not have been obvious.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection, therefore, are respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner states that claims 2, 5, and 34 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Notwithstanding, Applicant has elected to leave claims 2, 5, and 34 dependent on claim 1. Regardless, amended claim 1 and each corresponding dependent claim should now be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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